

# LACDMH PARTNERS WITH UNIVISION FOR UNPRECEDENTED OUTREACH TO SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY

By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director



Over forty phones rang off the hook during the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) and Univision phone bank on Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 P.M. to 11:30 P.M. Spanish-speaking volunteers from DMH, Pacific Clinics and the community answered over 650 calls (over 100 calls per hour!) at the Univision Studios in Los Angeles, providing information and referral about mental health services and helping to create awareness and discussion of mental health issues affecting the Spanish-speaking communities.

The telethon was broadcast live on Channel 34 in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, Ventura and Kern counties. The LACDMH ACCESS line (1-800-854-7771) was prepared for the influx and has, thus far, referred over 46 callers to mental health services in Los Angeles County.



"Few things are more confusing and frightening to a family or an individual as the emergence of mental health symptoms. Sometimes this confusion leads to the tragic mistake of self-medication with alcohol and drugs. But knowledge is power: Univision has stepped forward to bring the knowledge that we should not fear mental illness because it can be treated," said LACDMH Director Marvin Southard, D.S.W.

"The topic of mental health has long been a taboo among our Latino community that keeps them from seeking the help they need," said Alberto Mier y Terán, Executive Vice President of Univision Television Group. "We see it as our social responsibility to continue to work with partners such as the Department of Mental Health to create and strengthen community awareness through these phone banks and news content that will help break this stigma."



"Hearing the phones ring non-stop for 5 1/2 hours was a pleasant confirmation that our Hispanic community is ready to have a conversation about mental health. As a mental health reporter, it is a motivating factor to continue researching and seeking vital mental health resources and information for our audience," said Julio Cesar Ortiz, Mental Health Reporter for Univision 34.

Miriam A. Brown, L.C.S.W., District Chief, Law Enforcement Programs and Disaster Services, was interviewed live during the telethon, and spoke on the wide array of services LACDMH provides for all ages.

Vianney Vasquez, L.C.S.W., Hollywood Mental Health Center, was also interviewed during the broadcast, discussing the impact of mental illness on families when a loved one has a diagnosis and stressed that there is hope for those who suffer.



Throughout the evening, volunteers promoted the “Each Mind Matters” or “Sana Mente” campaign in Spanish by wearing t-shirts, hats and using pens and cups with the “Sana Mente” logo. The “Each Mind Matters” campaign is a grassroots effort to combat the stigma associated with having a mental illness and is California’s mental health movement. For more info: <http://www.eachmindmatters.org/>

Special thanks to all who made this event possible, including Univision staff, LACDMH staff, Pacific Clinics staff and our Spanish speaking clients, especially:

Julio Cesar Ortiz  
Miriam Brown  
Irma Martinez  
Luis Garcia  
Jaime Renteria  
Olivia Celis  
Kimberli Washington  
Vienna To  
Elizabeth Gomez  
Sandra Chacón  
Vianney Vasquez  
Maribel Contreras  
Nani Escudero  
Manuel Vasquez  
Rosa Maria Kolts  
Arlene Hernandez  
Maricela Estrada  
Claudia Razo  
Nettie Vasquez  
Raquel Rios  
Angelica Garcia  
Cynthia Gallardo

Guadalupe Yepiz  
Alma Gonzalez  
Nancy Robles  
Yadira Anguiano  
Mayra Flores  
Jesus Gutierrez  
Guadalupe Gutierrez  
Veronica Goujon  
Carlos Caldera  
Daisy Ortiz

Since January 2014, LACDMH and Univision's Senior Mental Health Reporter, Julio Cesar Ortiz, M.F.T., have worked together on a bi-weekly segment for its nightly news show, entitled "Una Mente, Una Vida," a discussion of mental health issues and decreasing the stigma associated with the diagnosis of mental illness. Julio Cesar Ortiz, M.F.T., and the LACDMH Public Information Office (PIO) collaborated on the project, committing to several months of featured stories. Univision reaches over 1.2 million viewers during the 11PM news broadcast and over 2 million during the 6PM broadcast. To watch the most recent segments of "Una Mente, Una Vida," click here: <http://t.co/wYs8HtsWbi>.

